EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Eric M. ringer on 2/17/09.

The application has been amended as follows:

Amend claims 1 and 3.

1. (Currently Amended) A method of continuously desalinating water by reverse osmosis, comprising:

introducing salt water under a first pressure by means of a delivery pump into a pressure compensating device having a piston/cylinder device with a salt water chamber and a concentrated salt water chamber,

introducing salt water from the salt water chamber of the pressure compensating device at a second increased pressure into a salt water chamber of a membrane module and separated therein by means of a membrane into desalinated water and concentrated salt water,

discharging the concentrated salt water from salt water chamber of the membrane module at approximately the second pressure,

introducing the concentrated salt water under approximately the second pressure into the concentrated salt water chamber of the pressure compensating device, wherein the concentrated salt water introduced into the concentrated salt water chamber of the pressure comp3ensating device acts with approximately the second pressure on the salt water introduced

into the salt water chamber of the pressure compensating device and acts on the salt water introduced into the membrane module, and

maintaining a continuous flow of the salt water over a surface of the membrane in the membrane module by means of salt water discharged from a piston reservoir having a pressure chamber, an outlet chamber, an inlet chamber and a piston, the piston having a front side facing the inlet chamber and a rear side having a first portion facing the outlet chamber and a second portion facing the inlet portion, each one of the front side of the piston and the first portion and the second portion of the rear side of the piston having a respective surface area, the inlet chamber connected to the salt water chamber of the pressure compensating device and the salt water chamber of the membrane module, the outlet chamber connected to a concentrated salt water outlet of the membrane module, and the pressure chamber connected to a pressure reservoir, and

applying an assisting pressure from the pressure reservoir to the pressure chamber, wherein the respective surface areas front side of the piston and the first portion and the second portion of the rear side of the piston have ratios such that the assisting pressure helps to produce at predetermined moments in time a respective pressure, which is greater than the second pressure of the salt water discharged from the pressure compensating device, in the inlet chamber.

3. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 further comprising applying the approximately second pressure of the concentrated salt water discharged from the membrane module to the outlet chamber to help produce the respective pressure in inlet chamber.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: the apparatus with the combination of piston (401, 402) with a further piston (403) provided with the

Deleted: pressure booster,

Deleted: the pressure booster having a piston reservoir with a piston, a pressure chamber, and a pressure reservoir, the piston having a front side with a respective surface area and a rear side with a respective surface area, wherein at the front side [[it]], the pressure booster has an inlet chamber connected to the salt water chamber of the pressure compensating device and the salt water [[inlet]] chamber of the membrane module and at the rear side [[it]] of the piston, the pressure booster has an outlet chamber connected to a concentrated salt water outlet of the membrane module and [[a]] the pressure chamber which is connected to [[a]] the pressure reservoir, and the surface area of the front side of the piston and the surface area of the rear side of the piston have a ratio such that at predetermined moments in time a respective pressure is produced in the inlet chamber of the pressure booster, which is greater than the second pressure of the salt water discharged from the pressure compensating device.

Deleted: wherein the respective pressure produced in the inlet chamber of the pressure booster includes combining

Deleted: [[and]] with an assisting pressure from [[a]] the pressure reservoir.

pressure chamber (503) and pressure reservoir (20) to in operation maintain a continuous flow of salt water over the surface of the membrane is not suggested in the prior art of record. the process of operating the pumping system to increase pressure of the water passing from chamber (201) by chamber (203) and assisting pressure from chamber (503) is not suggested in the prior art of record. Combination of multi-pistons is suggested in patents 6,841,076 and 6,017,200, the later showing common shaft pistons acting on the membrane. Applicant patent US 7,189,325 also shows the common shaft pistons combined with the membrane, as in current invention pistons 401 and 402, there is however; not suggestions of the third piston chamber arrangement provided with elements (503 and 20) to further increase the pressure in the water feed line (11).

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled “Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance.”

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ana M. Fortuna whose telephone number is (571) 272-1141. The examiner can normally be reached on 9:30-6:00 M-F.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner’s supervisor, David R. Sample can be reached on (571) 272-1376. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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